





George E. Trotter, III



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JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

HIS PA'S ROMANCE

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S  
SONS ♪ NEW YORK ♪ 1908

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TO  
EDGAR WILSON NYE

*SUCH silence—after such glad merriment!  
O prince of halest humor, wit and cheer,  
Could you yet speak to us, I doubt not we  
Should catch your voice, still blithely eloquent  
Above all murmurings of sorrow here,  
Calling your love back to us laughingly.*



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HIS PA'S ROMANCE



## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

ALL 'at I ever want to be  
Is ist to be a man like Pa  
When he wuz young an' married Ma!  
Uncle he telled us yisterdy  
Ist all about it then—'cause they,  
My Pa an' Ma, wuz bofe away  
To 'tend P'tracted Meetin', where  
My Pa an' Ma is allus there  
When all the big "Revivals" is,  
An' "Love-Feasts," too, an' "Class," an' "Prayer,"  
An' when's "Comoonian Servicis."  
An', yes, an' Uncle said to not  
To never tell *them* ner let on  
Like we knowed now ist how they got  
First married. So—while they wuz gone—  
Uncle he telled us ever'thing—  
'Bout how my Pa wuz ist a pore  
Farm-boy.—He says, I tell you *what*,

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

Your Pa *wuz* pore! But neighbours they  
All liked him—all but one old man  
An' his old wife that folks all say  
Nobody liked, ner never can!  
Yes, sir! an' Uncle purt'-nigh swore  
About the mean old man an' way  
He treat' my Pa!—'cause he's a pore  
Farm-hand—but prouder 'an a king—  
An' ist work' on, he did, an' wore  
His old patched clo'es, ist anyway,  
So he saved up his wages—then  
He ist worked on an' saved some more,  
An' ist worked on, ist night an' day—  
Till, sir, he save' up nine er ten  
Er hunnerd dollars! But he keep  
All still about it, Uncle say—  
But he ist thinks—an' thinks a heap!  
Though what he wuz a-thinkin', Pa  
He never tell' a soul but Ma—  
(Then, course, you know, he wuzn't Pa,  
An', course, you know, she wuzn't Ma—  
They wuz ist sweethearts, course you know);  
'Cause Ma wuz ist a girl, about  
Sixteen; an' when my Pa he go  
A-courtin' her, her Pa an' Ma—

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

The very first they find it out—  
Wuz maddest folks you ever saw!  
'Cause it wuz her old Ma an' Pa  
'At hate' my Pa, an' toss their head,  
An' ist raise Ned! An' her Pa said  
He'd ruther see his daughter dead!  
An' said she's ist a child!—an' so  
Wuz Pa!—An' ef he wuz man-grown  
An' only man on earth below,  
His daughter shouldn't marry him  
Ef he's a king an' on his throne!  
Pa's chances then looked mighty slim  
Fer certain, Uncle said. But he—  
He never told a soul but her  
What he wuz keepin' quiet fer.  
Her folks ist lived a mile from where  
He lived at—an' they drove past there  
To git to town. An' ever' one  
An' all the neighbors they liked her  
An' showed it! But her folks—no, sir!—  
Nobody liked her parents none!  
An' so when they shet down, you know,  
On Pa—an' old man tell' him so—  
Pa ist went back to work, an' she  
Ist waited. An', sir! purty soon

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

Her folks they thought he's turned his eye  
Some other way—'cause by-an'-by  
They heard he'd *rented* the old place  
He worked on. An' one afternoon  
A neighbor, that had bust' a trace,  
*He* tell' the old man they wuz signs  
Around the old place that the young  
Man wuz a-fixin' up the old  
Log cabin some, an' he had brung  
New furnichur from town; an' told  
How th' old house 'uz whitewashed clean  
An' sweet—wiv morning-glory vines  
An' hollyhawks all 'round the door  
An' winders—an' a bran'-new floor  
In th' old porch—an' wite-new green-  
An'-red pump in the old sweep-well!  
An', Uncle said, when he hear tell  
O' all them things, the old man he  
Ist grin' an' says, he "reckon' now  
Some gal, er widder anyhow,  
That silly boy he's coaxed at last  
To marry him!" he says, says-ee,  
"An' ef he has, 'so mote it be'!"  
Then went back to the house to tell  
His *wife* the news, as he went past

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

The smokehouse, an' then went on in  
The kitchen, where his daughter she  
Wuz washin', to tell *her*, an' grin  
An' try to worry her a spell!  
The mean old thing! But Uncle said  
She ain't cry much—ist pull her old  
Sunbonnet forrerd on her head—  
So's old man he can't see her face  
At all! An' when he s'pose he scold  
An' jaw enough, he ist clear' out  
An' think he's boss of all the place!

Then Uncle say, the first you know  
They's go' to be a Circus-show  
In town; an' old man think he'll take  
His wife an' go. An' when she say  
To take their daughter, too, *she* shake  
Her head like she don't *want* to go;  
An' when he sees she wants to stay,  
The old man takes her, anyway!  
An' so she went! But Uncle he  
Said she looked mighty sweet that day,  
Though she wuz pale as she could be,  
A-speshully a-drivin' by  
Wite where her beau lived at, you know;

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

But out the corner of his eye  
The old man watch' her; but she throw  
Her pairsol 'round so she can't see  
The house at all! An' then she hear  
Her Pa an' Ma a-talkin' low  
An' kindo' laughin'-like; but she  
Ist set there in the seat behind,  
P'tendin' like she didn't mind.  
An', Uncle say, when they got past  
The young man's place, an' 'pearantly  
He wuzn't home, but off an' gone  
To town, the old man turned at last  
An' talked back to his daughter there,  
All pleasant-like, from then clean on  
Till they got into town, an' where  
The Circus wuz, an' on inside  
O' that, an' through the crowd, on to  
The very top seat in the tent  
Wite next the band—a-bangin' through  
A tune 'at bust his yeers in two!  
An' there the old man scrouged an' tried  
To make his wife set down, an' she  
A-yellin'! But ist what she meant  
He couldn't hear, ner couldn't see  
Till she turned 'round an' pinted. Then

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

He turned an' looked—an' looked again! . . .  
He ist saw neighbors ever'where—  
But, sir, *his daughter* wuzn't there!  
An', Uncle says, he even saw  
Her beau, you know, he hated so;  
An' he wuz with some other girl.  
An' then he heard the Clown "Haw-haw!"  
An' saw the horses wheel an' whirl  
Around the ring, an' heard the zipp  
O' the Ringmaster's long slim whip—  
But that whole Circus, Uncle said,  
Wuz all inside the old man's head!

An' Uncle said, he didn't find  
His daughter all that afternoon—  
An' her Ma says she'll lose her mind  
Ef they don't find her purty soon!  
But, though they looked all day, an' stayed  
There fer the night p'formance—not  
No use at all!—they never laid  
Their eyes on her. An' then they got  
Their team out, an' the old man shook  
His fist at all the town, an' then  
Shook it up at the moon ag'in,  
An' said his time 'ud come, some day!  
An' jerked the lines an' driv away.

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

Uncle, he said, he 'spect, that night,  
The old man's madder yet when they  
Drive past the young man's place, an' hear  
A fiddle there, an' see a light  
Inside, an' shadders light an' gay  
A-dancin' 'crosst the winder-blinds.  
An' some young chaps outside yelled, "Say!  
What 'pears to be the hurry—hey?"  
But the old man ist whipped the lines  
An' streaked past like a runaway!

An' now you'll be su'prised, I bet!—  
I hardly ain't quit laughin' yet  
When Uncle say, that jamboree  
An' dance an' all—w'y, that's a sign  
That any old man ort to see,  
As plain as 8 and 1 makes 9,  
That they's *a weddin'* wite inside  
That very house he's whippin' so  
To git apast!—An', sir! the bride  
There's his own daughter! Yes, an' oh!  
She's my Ma now—an' young man she  
Got married, he's my Pa! *Whoop-ee!*  
But Uncle say to not laugh all  
The laughin' yet, but please save some  
To kindo' spice up what's to come!

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

Then Uncle say, about next day  
The neighbors they begin to call  
An' wish 'em well, an' say how glad  
An' proud an' tickled ever' way  
Their friends all is—an' how they had  
The lovin' prayers of ever' one  
That had homes of their own! But none  
Said nothin' 'bout the home that she  
Had run away from! So she sighed  
Sometimes—an' wunst she purt-'nigh cried.

Well, Uncle say, her old Pa, he  
Ist like to died, he wuz so mad!  
An' her Ma, too! But by-an'-by  
They cool down some.

An', 'bout a week,  
She want to see her Ma so bad,  
She think she'll haf to go! An' so  
She coax him; an' he kiss her cheek  
An' say, Lord bless her, *course* they'll go!  
An', Uncle say, when they're bofe come  
A-knockin' there at her old home—  
W'y, first he know, the door it flew  
Open, all quick, an' she's jerked in,

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

An', quicker still, the door's banged to  
An' locked: an' crosst the winder-sill  
The old man pokes a shotgun through  
An' says to git! "You stold my child,"  
He says; "an', now she's back, w'y, you  
Clear out, this minute, er I'll kill  
You! Yes, an' I 'ull kill her, too,  
Ef you don't go!" An' then, all wild,  
His young wife begs him please to go!  
An' so he turn' an' walk'—all slow  
An' pale as death, but awful still  
An' ca'm—back to the gate, an' on  
Into the road, where he had gone  
So many times alone, you know!  
An', Uncle say, a whipperwill  
Holler so lonesome, as he go  
On back to'rds home, he say he 'spec'  
He ist 'ud like to wring its neck!  
An' I ain't think he's goin' back  
All by hisse'f—but Uncle say  
That's what he does, an' it's a fac'!

An' 'pears-like he's gone back to *stay*—  
'Cause there he stick', ist thataway,  
An' don't go nowheres any more,

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

Ner don't nobody ever see  
Him set his foot outside the door—  
Till 'bout five days, a boy loped down  
The road, a-comin' past from town,  
An' he called to him from the gate,  
An' sent the old man word: He's thought  
Things over now; an', while he hate  
To lose his wife, he think she ought  
To mind her Pa an' Ma an' do  
Whatever *they* advise her to.  
An' sends word, too, to come an' git  
Her new things an' the furnichur  
That he had special' bought fer her—  
'Cause, now that they wuz goin' to quit,  
She's free to ist have all of it;—  
So, fer his love fer her, he say  
To come an' git it, wite away.  
An' *spang!* that very afternoon,  
Here come her Ma—ist 'bout as soon  
As old man could hitch up an' tell  
Her "hurry back!" An' 'bout as quick  
As she's drove there to where my Pa—  
I mean to where her son-in-law—  
Lives at, he meets her at the door  
All smilin', though he's awful pale

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

An' trimbly—like he's ist been sick;  
He take her in the house—An', 'fore  
She knows it, they's a cellar-door  
Shet on her, an' she hears the click  
Of a' old rusty padlock! Then,  
Uncle, he say, she kindo' stands  
An' thinks—an' thinks—an' thinks ag'in—  
An' mayby thinks of her own child  
Locked up—like her! An' Uncle smiled,  
An' I ist laughed an' clapped my hands!  
An' there she stayed! An' she can cry  
Ist all she want! an' yell an' kick  
To ist her heart's content! an' try  
To pry out wiv a quiltin'-stick!  
But Uncle say he guess at last  
She 'bout give up, an' holler' through  
The door-crack fer to please to be  
So kind an' good as send an' tell  
The old man, like she want him to,  
To come, 'fore night, an' set her free,  
Er—they wuz rats down there! An' yell  
She did, till, Uncle say, it soured  
The morning's milk in the back yard!  
But all the answer reached her, where  
She's skeered so in the dark down there,

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

Wuz ist a mutterin' that she heard,—  
“*I've sent him word!—I've sent him word!*”  
An' shore enough, as Uncle say,  
He *has* “sent word!”

Well, it's plum night  
An' all the house is shet up tight—  
Only one winder 'bout half-way  
Raised up, you know; an' ain't no light  
Inside the whole house, Uncle say.  
Then, first you know, there where the team  
Stands hitched yet, there the old man stands—  
A' old tin lantern in his hands  
An' monkey-wrench; an' he don't seem  
To make things out, a-standin' there.  
He comes on to the gate an' feels  
An' fumbles fer the latch—then hears  
A voice that chills him to the heels—  
“You halt! an' stand right where you air!”  
Then, sir! my—my—his son-in-law,  
There at the winder wiv his gun,  
He tell the old man what he's done:  
“You hold *my* wife a prisoner—  
An' *your* wife, drat ye! I've got *her*!”  
An' now, sir,” Uncle say he say,

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

“You ist turn round an’ climb wite in  
That wagon, an’ drive home ag’in  
An’ bring my wife back wite away,  
An’ we’ll trade then—an’ not before  
Will I unlock my cellar-door—  
Not fer your wife’s sake ner your own,  
But *my* wife’s sake—an’ her’s alone!”  
An’, Uncle say, it don’t sound like  
It’s so, but yet it is!—He say,  
From wite then, somepin seem’ to strike  
The old man’s funny-bone some way;  
An’, minute more, that team o’ his  
Went tearin’ down the road *k’whiz!*  
An’ in the same two-forty style  
Come whizzin’ back! An’ oh, that-air  
Sweet girl a-cryin’ all the while,  
Thinkin’ about her Ma there, shet  
In her own daughter’s cellar, where—  
Ist week or so *she’s* kep’ house there—  
She hadn’t time to clean it yet!  
So when her Pa an’ her they git  
There—an’ the young man grab’ an’ kiss  
An’ hug her, till she make him quit  
An’ ask him where her mother is.  
An’ then he smile’ an’ try to not;

## HIS PA'S ROMANCE

Then slow-like find th' old padlock key,  
An' blow a' oat-hull out of it,  
An' then stoop down there where he's got  
Her Ma locked up so keerfully—  
An' where, wite there, he say he thought  
It *ort* to been *the old man*—though  
Uncle, he say, he reckon not—  
When out she bounced, all tickled so  
To taste fresh air ag'in an' find  
Her folks wunst more, an' grab' her child  
An' cry an' laugh, an' even go  
An' hug the old man; an' he wind  
Her in his arms, an' laugh, an' pat  
Her back, an' say he's riconciled,  
In such a happy scene as that,  
To swop his daughter for her Ma,  
An' have so smart a son-in-law  
As *they* had! “Yes, an' he's my Pa!”  
I laugh' an' yell', “Hooray-hooraw!”

## SONG DISCORDANT

I WANT to say it, and I will:—

You are as sour as you are sweet,  
And sweeter than the daffodil

That blossoms at your feet.—

You are as plain as you are fair;

And though I hate, I love you still,  
And so—*confound* you, darling! *There!*—

I want to say it, and I will!

I want to ask it, and I do

*Demand* of you a perfect trust,—  
But love me as I want you to—

You must, you minx!—you must!  
You blight and bless me, till I swear

And pray—chaotic even as you.—  
I curse—Nay, dear,—I *kiss* you. *There!*—

I want to, and I do!

## A LOST LOVE

'TWAS a summer ago when he left me here—  
A summer of smiles, with never a tear  
Till I said to him, with a sob, my dear,—  
    Good-by, my lover; good-by!

For I loved him, O as the stars love night!  
And my cheeks for him flashed red and white  
When first he called me his Heart's delight,—  
    Good-by, my lover; good-by!

The touch of his hand was a thing divine  
As he sat with me in the soft moonshine  
And drank of my love as men drink wine,—  
    Good-by, my lover; good-by!

And never a night as I knelt in prayer,  
In thought as white as our own souls were,  
But in fancy he came and he kissed me there,—  
    Good-by, my lover; good-by!

## A LOST LOVE

But now—ah, *now!* what an empty place  
My whole heart is!—Of the old embrace  
And the kiss I loved there lives no trace—  
Good-by, my lover; good-by!

He sailed not over the stormy sea,  
And he went not down in the waves—not he—  
But O, he is lost—for he married me—  
Good-by, my lover; good-by!

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## ALMOST BEYOND ENDURANCE

I AIN'T a-goin' to cry no more, no more!  
I'm got ear-ache, an' Ma can't make  
It quit a-tall;  
An' Carlo bite my rubber-ball  
An' puncture it; an' Sis she take  
An' poke' my knife down through the stable-floor  
An' loozed it—blame it all!  
But I ain't goin' to cry no more, no more!

An' Aunt Mame *wrote* she's comin', an' she *can't*—  
Folks is come *there!*—An' I don't care  
She *is* my Aunt!  
An' my eyes stings; an' I'm  
Ist coughin' all the time,  
An' hurts me so; an' where my side's so sore  
Grampa felt where, an' he  
Says "Mayby it's *pleurasy!*"  
But I ain't goin' to cry no more, no more!

ALMOST BEYOND ENDURANCE

An' I clumbed up an' nen falled off the fence,

An' Herbert he ist laugh at me!

An' my fi'-cents

It sticked in my tin bank, an' I ist tore

Purt'-nigh my thumbnail off, a-tryin' to git

It out—nen *smash* it!—An' it's in there yit!

But I ain't goin' to cry no more, no more!

*Oo!* I'm so wickud!—An' my breath's so *hot*—

Ist like I run an' don't res' none

But ist run on when I ought to not;

Yes, an' my chin

An' lips 's all warpy, an' teeth's so fast,

An' 's a place in my throat I can't swaller past—

An' they all hurt so!—

An' oh, my-oh!

I'm a-startin' ag'in—

I'm a-startin' ag'in, but I *won't*, fer shore!—

*I ist ain't goin' to cry no more, no more!*

## A SIMPLE RECIPE

To be a wholly worthy man,  
As you, my boy, would like to be,—  
This is to show you how you can—  
This simple recipe:—

Be honest—both in word and act,  
Be strictly truthful through and through:  
Fact cannot fail.—You stick to fact,  
And fact will stick to you.

Be clean—outside and in, and sweep  
Both hearth and heart and hold them bright;  
Wear snowy linen—aye, and keep  
Your *conscience* snowy-white.

Do right, your utmost—good *must* come  
To you who do your level-best—  
Your very hopes will help you some,  
And work will do the rest.

## THE TOY-BALLOON

THEY wuz a Big Day wunst in town,  
An' little Jason's Pa  
Bued him a little toy-balloon,  
The first he ever saw.—  
An' oh! but Jase wuz *more'n* proud,  
A-holdin' to the string  
An' scrougin' through the grea'-big crowd,  
To hear the Glee Club sing.

The Glee Club it wuz goin' to sing  
In old Masonic Hall;  
An' Speakin', it wuz in there, too,  
An' soldiers, folks an' all:  
An' Jason's Pa he git a seat  
An' set down purty soon,  
A-holdin' little Jase, an' him  
A-holdin' his balloon.

## THE TOY-BALLOON

An' while the Speakin's startin' up  
An' ever'body still—

The first you know wuz little Jase  
A-yellin' fit to kill!—

Nen Jason's Pa jump on his seat  
An' grab up in the air,—

But little Jason's toy-balloon  
Wuz clean away from there!

An' Jase he yelled; an' Jase's Pa,  
Still lookin' up, clumb down—

While that-air little toy-balloon  
Went bumpin' roun' an' roun'

Ag'inst the ceilin', 'way up there

Where ever'body saw,  
An' *they* all yelled, an' *Jason* yelled,  
An' little Jason's Pa!

But when his Pa he packed him out  
A-screamin'—nen the crowd

Looked down an' hushed—till they looked up  
An' howled ag'in out loud;

An' nen the speaker, mad an' pale,

Jist turned an' left the stand,  
An' all j'ined in the Glee Club—"Hail,  
Columby, Happy Land!"

## HER LONESOMENESS

WHEN little Elizabeth whispers  
Her morning-love to me,  
Each word of the little lisper's,  
As she clambers on my knee—  
Hugs me and whispers, "Mommy,  
Oh, I'm so glad it's day  
And the night 's all gone away!"  
How it does thrill and awe me,—  
"The night 's all gone away!"

"Sometimes I wake, all listenin',"  
She sighs, "and all 's so still!—  
The moon and the stars half-glistenin'  
Over the window-sill:—  
And I look where the gas's pale light  
Is all turned down in the hall—  
And you ain't here at all!—  
And oh, how I wish it was daylight!  
—And you ain't here at all!

## HER LONESOMENESS

“And oh,” she goes eerily whining  
And laughing, too, as she speaks,  
“If only the sun kept shining  
For weeks and weeks and weeks!—  
For the world’s so dark, without you,  
And the moon ’s turned down so low—  
’Way in the night, you know,—  
And I get so lonesome about you!—  
’Way in the night, you know!”

## WITH A CHILD-BOOK

TO MASTER PRESTON FROM HIS LONG-INVISIBLE PLAYMATE

THERE is LORE of more devices,  
And ROMANCE that more entices  
Higher minds and higher prices;—  
But, for “Giggle-boy” or “Cry-sis”  
(With some snifless interstices)  
Here’s a little tale suffices—  
Sweet as oranges in slices  
Slobbered in slues o’ cream and ices,  
Tanged with tingling, spangling spices.—  
Ho! there’s *no* tale half so nice as  
This Old Tailor and his Mice is!

## BILLY MILLER'S CIRCUS-SHOW

AT Billy Miller's Circus-Show—

In their old stable where it 's at—  
The boys pays twenty pins to go,  
An' gits their money's-worth at that!—  
'Cause Billy he can climb and chalk  
His stockin'-feet an' purt'-nigh walk  
A tight-rope—yes, an' ef he fall  
He'll ketch, an' "skin a cat"—'at's all!

He ain't afeard to swing and hang  
Ist by his legs!—an' mayby stop  
An' yell "Look out!" an' nen—k-spang!—  
He'll let loose, upside-down, an' drop  
Wite on his hands! An' nen he'll do  
"Contortion-acts"—ist limber through  
As "Injarubber Mens" 'at goes  
With shore-fer-certain circus-shows!

## BILLY MILLER'S CIRCUS-SHOW

At Billy Miller's Circus-Show

He's got a circus-ring—an' they's

A dressin'-room,—so's he can go

An' dress an' paint up when he plays

He's somepin' else;—'cause sometimes he's

"Ringmaster"—bossin' like he please—

An' sometimes "Ephalunt"—er "Bare-

Back Rider," prancin' out o' there!

An' sometimes—an' the best of all!—

He's "The Old Clown," an' got on clo'es

All stripud,—an' white hat, all tall

An' peakud—like in shore-'nuff shows,—

An' got three-cornered red-marks, too,

On his white cheeks—ist like they do!—

An' you'd ist die, the way he sings

An' dances an' says funny things!

## THE LAW OF THE PERVERSE

WHERE did the custom come from, anyway?—

Sending the boys to “play,” at dinner-time,  
When we have company? What is there, pray,

About the starched, unmalleable *guest*

That, in the host's most genial interest,  
Finds *him* first favour on Thanksgiving Day

Beside the steaming turkey, with its wings

Akimbo over all the savoury things

It has been stuffed with, yet may never thus

Make one poor boy's face glad and glorious!

Fancy the exiled boy in the back-yard,

Ahungered so, that any kind of grub

Were welcome, yet with face set stern and hard,

Hearing the feasters' mirth and mild hubbub,

And wanting to kill something with a club!—

Intuitively arguing the unjust

Distinction, as he naturally must,—

## THE LAW OF THE PERVERSE

The guest with all the opportunity—  
The boy with all the appetite! Ah, me!

So is it that, when I, a luckless guest,  
Am thus arraigned at banquet, I sit grim  
And sullen, eating nothing with a zest,—  
With smirking features, yet a soul distressed,  
Missing the banished boy and envying him—  
Aye, longing for a spatter on my vest  
From his deflecting spoon, and yearning for  
The wild swoop of his lips insatiate, or  
His ever-ravenous, marauding eye  
Fore-eating everything, from soup to pie!

## A SONG O' CHEER

MY Grampa he's a-allus sayin',  
    "Sing a song o' cheer!"—  
And wunst I says "What kind is them?"  
    He says,—"The kind to *hear*.—  
'Cause they're the songs that *Nature* sings,  
    In ever' bird that twitters!"  
"Well, *whipperwills* and *doves*," says I,  
    "Hain't over-cheery critters!"  
"Then don't you sing like *them*," he says—  
    "Ner *guinny-hens*, my dear—  
Ner *peafowls* nuther (drat the boy!)  
    *You sing a song o' cheer!*"  
I can't sing nothin' anyhow;  
    But, comin' home, to'rds night,  
I kindo'-sorto' kep' a-whistlin'  
    "Old—Bob—White!"

## THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA

I'M The Old Man of the Sea—I am!—  
And this is my secret pride,  
That I have a hundred shapes, all sham,  
And a hundred names beside:  
They have named me “Habit,” and “Way,” forsooth,  
“Capricious,” and “Fancy-free”;—  
But to you, O Youth, I confess the truth,—  
I'm The Old Man of the Sea.

*I'm The Old Man of the Sea, yo-ho !  
So lift up a song with me,  
As I sit on the throne of your shoulders, alone,  
I'm The Old Man of the Sea.*

Crowned with the crown of your noblest thought,  
I'm The Old Man of the Sea:  
I reign, rule, ruin, and palter not  
In my pitiless tyranny:

## THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA

You, my lad, are my gay Sindbad,  
Frisking about, with me  
High on the perch I have always had—  
I'm The Old Man of the Sea.

*I'm The Old Man of the Sea, yo-ho !  
So lift up a song with me,  
As I sit on the throne of your shoulders, alone,  
I'm The Old Man of the Sea.*

Tricked in the guise of your best intent,  
I am your failures—all—  
I am the victories you invent,  
And your high resolves that fall:  
I am the vow you are breaking now  
As the wassail-bowl swings free  
And the red guilt flushes your cheek and brow—  
I'm The Old Man of the Sea.

*I'm The Old Man of the Sea, yo-ho !  
So lift up a song with me,  
As I sit on the throne of your shoulders, alone,  
I'm The Old Man of the Sea.*

I am your false dreams of success  
And your mythical future fame—

## THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA

Your life-long lies, and your soul's distress  
And your slowly-dying shame:  
I'm the chattering half of your latest laugh,  
And your tongue's last perfidy—  
Your doom, your tomb, and your epitaph . . .  
I'm The Old Man of the Sea.

*I'm The Old Man of the Sea, yo-ho !  
So lift up a song with me,  
As I sit on the throne of your shoulders, alone,  
I'm The Old Man of the Sea.*

## AT NINETY IN THE SHADE

HOT weather? Yes; but really not,  
Compared with weather twice as hot.  
Find comfort, then, in arguing thus,  
And you'll pull through victorious!—  
For instance, while you gasp and pant  
And try to cool yourself—and can't—  
With soda, cream and lemonade,  
The heat at ninety in the shade,—  
Just calmly sit and ponder o'er  
These same degrees, with ninety more  
On top of them, and so concede  
The weather now is cool indeed!  
Think—as the perspiration dews  
Your fevered brow, and seems to ooze  
From out the ends of every hair—  
Whole floods of it, with floods to spare—  
Think, I repeat, the while the sweat  
Pours down your spine—how hotter yet

## AT NINETY IN THE SHADE

Just ninety *more* degrees would be,  
And bear *this* ninety patiently!  
Think—as you mop your brow and hair,  
With sticky feelings everywhere—  
How ninety more degrees increase  
Of heat like this would start the grease;  
Or, think, as you exhausted stand,  
A wilted “palmleaf” in each hand—  
When the thermometer has done  
With ease the lap of ninety-one;  
O think, I say, what heat might do  
At one hundred and eighty-two—  
Just twice the heat you now declare,  
Complainingly, is hard to bear.  
Or, as you watch the mercury  
Mount, still elate, one more degree,  
And doff your collar and cravat,  
And rig a sponge up in your hat,  
And ask Tom, Harry, Dick or Jim  
If this is hot enough for him—  
Consider how the sun would pour  
At one hundred and eighty-four—  
Just twice the heat that seems to be  
Affecting you unpleasantly,  
The very hour that you might find

AT NINETY IN THE SHADE

As cool as dew, were you inclined.  
But why proceed when none will heed  
Advice apportioned to the need?  
Hot weather? Yes; but really not,  
Compared with weather twice as hot!

## GOOD-BY ER HOWDY-DO

SAY good-by er howdy-do—  
What's the odds betwixt the two?  
Comin'—goin'—ev'ry day—  
Best friends first to go away—  
Grasp of hands you'd ruther hold  
Than their weight in solid gold  
Slips their grip while greetin' you.—  
Say good-by er howdy-do!

Howdy-do, and then, good-by—  
Mixes jist like laugh and cry;  
Deaths and births, and worst and best,  
Tangled their contrariest;  
Ev'ry jinglin' weddin'-bell  
Skeerin' up some funer'l knell.—  
Here's my song, and there's your sigh.—  
Howdy-do, and then, good-by!

## GOOD-BY ER HOWDY-DO

Say good-by er howdy-do—  
Jist the same to me and you;  
'Taint worth while to make no fuss,  
'Cause the job's put up on us!  
Some One's runnin' this concern  
That's got nothin' else to learn:  
Ef *He's* willin', we'll pull through—  
Say good-by er howdy-do!

## A LOCAL POLITICIAN FROM AWAY BACK

JEDGE is good at argyin'—  
No mistake in that!  
Most folks 'at tackles *him*  
He'll skin 'em like a cat!  
You see, the Jedge is read up,  
And ben in politics,  
Hand-in-glove, you might say,  
Sense back in '56.

Elected to the Shurrif, first,  
Then elected Clerk;  
Went into lawin' then,  
And buckled down to work;  
Practised three or four terms,  
Then he run for jedge—  
Speechified a little 'round,  
And went in like a wedge!

## A LOCAL POLITICIAN FROM AWAY BACK

Run fer Legislatur' twic't—  
Made her, ever' pop!  
Keeps on the way he's doin',  
Don't know where he'll stop!  
Some thinks he's got his eye  
On the govnership;—  
Well, ef he tuk the track,  
Guess he'd make the trip.

But I started out to tell ye—  
(Now I allus liked *the man*—  
Not fer his politics,  
But *social'*, understan'!—  
Fer, 's regards to *my* views,  
Political and sich,—  
When we come together there  
We're purty ap' to hitch.)

Ketched him in at Knox's shop  
On'y t'other day—  
Gittin' shaved, the Jedge was,  
Er somepin' thataway.—  
Well, I tetched him up some  
On the silver bill:—  
Jedge says, "I won't discuss it;"  
*I* says, "*You will!*"

A LOCAL POLITICIAN FROM AWAY BACK

I-says-ee, "I reckon  
You'll concede with me,  
*Coin's* the on'y genuine  
Money," I-says-ee;  
Says I, "What's a dollar-bill?"  
Says I, "What's a ten—  
Er forty-leven hunderd of 'em?—  
Give us *specie*, then!"

I seed I was a gittin'  
The Jedge kindo' red  
Around the gills. He hawked some  
And cle'red his throat and said—  
"Facts is too complicated  
'Bout the bill in view,"  
Squirmed and told the barber then  
He wisht he'd hurry through.

'Ll, then, I knowed I had him,—  
And the crowd around the fire  
Was all a-winkin' at me,  
As the barber raised him higher—  
Says I, "Jedge, what's a dollar?—  
Er a half-un," I-says-ee—  
"What's a *quarter*?—What's a *dime*?"  
"What's *cents*?" says he.

## A LOCAL POLITICIAN FROM AWAY BACK

W'y, I had him fairly b'ilin'!  
    "You needn't comb my hair,"  
He says to the barber—  
    "I want fresh air;"  
And you'd a-died a-laughin'  
    To a-seed him grab his hat,  
As I-says-ee, says I, "Jedge,  
    Where you goin' at!"

Jedge is good at argyin',  
    By-and-large; and yit  
Beat him at his own game  
    And he's goin' to git!  
And yit the Jedge is read up,  
    And ben in politics,  
Hand-in-glove, you might say,  
    Sence back in '56.

## LARRY NOOLAN'S NEW YEAR

BE-GORRIE, aI wor sorry  
When the Ould Year died:  
An' aI says, "aI'll shtart to-morry,  
Like aI've always thried—  
aI'll give yez all fair warnin'  
aI'll be shtartin' in the mornin'  
From the wakeness aI was born in—  
When the Ould Year died."

The year forninsht the pasht wan,  
When the Ould Year died,  
Says aI, "This is the lasht wan  
aI'll be filled—wid pride."  
So says aI til Miss McCarty  
aI wor meetin' at the party,  
"Lave us both be drinkin' hearty!"  
When the Ould Year died.

## LARRY NOOLAN'S NEW YEAR

So we dined an' wined together,  
When the Ould Year died,  
An' agreed on health an' weather,  
An' the whule wurrl'd wide,  
An' says aI,—“aI'm thinkin' very  
Much it's you aI'd like to marry:”  
“Then,” says she, “Why don't you, Larry?”  
When the Ould Year died.

## “A BRAVE REFRAIN”

WHEN snow is here, and the trees look weird,  
And the knuckled twigs are gloved with frost;  
When the breath congeals in the drover's beard,  
And the old pathway to the barn is lost;  
When the rooster's crow is sad to hear,  
And the stamp of the stabled horse is vain,  
And the tone of the cow-bell grieves the ear—  
O then is the time for a brave refrain!

When the gears hang stiff on the harness-peg,  
And the tallow gleams in frozen streaks;  
And the old hen stands on a lonesome leg,  
And the pump sounds hoarse and the handle squeaks;  
When the woodpile lies in a shrouded heap,  
And the frost is scratched from the window-pane  
And anxious eyes from the inside peep—  
O then is the time for a brave refrain!

“ A BRAVE REFRAIN ”

When the ax-helve warms at the chimney-jamb,  
And hob-nailed shoes on the hearth below,  
And the house-cat curls in a slumber calm,  
And the eight-day clock ticks loud and slow;  
When the harsh broom-handle jabs the ceil  
’Neath the kitchen-loft, and the drowsy brain  
Sniffs the breath of the morning meal—  
O then is the time for a brave refrain!

ENVOI

When the skillet seethes, and a blubbering hot  
Tilts the lid of the coffee-pot,  
And the scent of the buckwheat cake grows plain—  
O then is the time for a brave refrain!

## I SMOKE MY PIPE

I CAN'T extend to every friend  
In need a helping hand—  
No matter though I wish it so,  
'Tis not as Fortune planned;  
But haply may I fancy they  
Are men of different stripe  
Than others think who hint and wink,—  
And so—I smoke my pipe!

A golden coal to crown the bowl—  
My pipe and I alone,—  
I sit and muse with idler views  
Perchance than I should own:—  
It might be worse to own the purse  
Whose gluttoned bowels gripe  
In little qualms of stinted alms;  
And so I smoke my pipe.

## I SMOKE MY PIPE

And if inclined to moor my mind  
And cast the anchor Hope,  
A puff of breath will put to death  
The morbid misanthrope  
That lurks inside—as errors hide  
In standing forms of type  
To mar at birth some line of worth;  
And so I smoke my pipe.

The subtle stings misfortune flings  
Can give me little pain  
When my narcotic spell has wrought  
This quiet in my brain:  
When I can waste the past in taste  
So luscious and so ripe  
That like an elf I hug myself;  
And so I smoke my pipe.

And wrapped in shrouds of drifting clouds  
I watch the phantom's flight,  
Till alien eyes from Paradise  
Smile on me as I write:  
And I forgive the wrongs that live,  
As lightly as I wipe  
Away the tear that rises here;  
And so I smoke my pipe.

## KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN

1894

Frederick Nicholls Crouch, the Musical Genius and Composer of the world-known air "Kathleen Mavourneen," was, at above date, living, in helpless age, in his adopted Country, America—a citizen since 1849.

KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN! The song is still ringing  
As fresh and as clear as the trill of the birds;  
In world-weary hearts it is throbbing and singing  
In pathos too sweet for the tenderest words.  
Oh, have we forgotten the one who first breathed it?  
Oh, have we forgotten his rapturous art—  
Our meed to the master whose genius bequeathed it?  
Oh, why art thou silent, thou Voice of the Heart?—  
*Our meed to the master whose genius bequeathed it—*  
*Oh, why are we silent, Kathleen Mavourneen!*

Kathleen Mavourneen! Thy lover still lingers;  
The long night is waning, the stars pale and few;

KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN

Thy sad serenader, with tremulous fingers,  
Is bowed with his tears as the lily with dew;  
The old harpstrings quaver, the old voice is shaking;  
In sighs and in sobs moans the yearning refrain;  
The old vision dims, and the old heart is breaking . . .  
Kathleen Mavourneen, inspire us again!  
*The old vision dims, and the old heart is breaking:*  
*Oh, why are we silent, Kathleen Mavourneen!*

## LISPING IN NUMBERS

WE' got a' Uncle writes poetry-rhymes  
Fer me an' Eddie to *speak*, sometimes,—  
'Cause *he's* a *poet*—an' he gits *paid*  
Fer poetry-writin',—'cause that's his *trade*.  
An' Eddie says he's goin' to try  
To be a poet, too, by an' by  
When he's a man!—An' I 'spect he is,  
'Cause on his slate wunst he print' this  
An' call it

### "THE SQUIRL AND THE FUNY LITEL GIRL"

*"A litel girl  
Whose name wuz Perl  
Went to the woods to play.  
The day wuz brite,  
An' her hart wuz lite  
As she galy skiped a way.*

## LISPING IN NUMBERS

*"A queer litel chatter,  
A soft litel patter,  
She herd in the top of a tree:  
The suprizd litel Perl  
Saw a qute litel squirl,  
As cuning as cuning cud be.*

*"She twisted her curl,  
As she looked at the squirl,  
An' playfully told it 'good day!'  
She calld it 'Bunny'—  
Wuzent that funy?  
An' it noded an' bounded a way."*

Ma read it, an' says "she's *awful* proud,"—  
An' Pa says "Splendid!" an' laugh' out loud;  
But Uncle says, "You can talk as you please,  
It's a purty good little poetry-piece!"

## HE COMETH IN SWEET SENSE

HE cometh in sweet sense to thee,  
Be it or dawn, or noon, or night,—  
No deepest pain, nor halest glee,  
But He discerneth it aright.

If there be tears bedim thine eyes,  
His sympathy thou findest plain,—  
The darkest midnight of the skies  
He weepeth with the tears of rain.

If thou art joyful, He hath had  
His gracious will, and lo, 'tis well,—  
As thou art glad, so He is glad,  
Nor mercy strained one syllable.

Wild vows are words, as prayers are words.—  
God's mercy is not measured by  
Our poor deservings: He affords  
To listen, if we laugh or cry.

## MR. SILBERBERG

### AND LITTLE JULIUS

I LIKE me yet dot leedle chile  
Vich climb my lap up in to-day,  
Unt took my cheap cigair away,  
Unt laugh unt kiss me, purty-whvile,—  
Possescially I like dose mout'  
Vich taste his moder's like—unt so,  
Eef my cigair it gone glean out  
—Yust let it go!

Vat I caire den for *anyding*?  
Der "HERALDT" schlip out fon my handt  
Unt all my odvairtizement standt  
Mitout new changements boddering;  
I only t'ink—I haf me dis  
One leedle boy to pet unt love  
Unt play me vit, unt hug unt kiss—  
Unt dot's enough!

MR. SILBERBERG

Der plans unt pairposes I veear  
Out in der vorld all fades away,  
Unt vit der beeznis of der day  
I got me den no time to spare;  
Der caires of trade vas caires no more—  
Dem cash accountds dey dodge me by,  
Unt vit my chile I roll der floor,  
Unt laugh unt gry!

Ach! frient! dem childens is der ones  
Dot got some happy times—you bet!—  
Dot's vy ven I been growed up yet  
I visht I shtill been leedle vonce!  
Unt ven dot leedle roozter tries  
Dem baby-tricks I used to do,  
My mout' it vater, unt my eyes  
Dey vater too!

Unt all der summertime unt spring  
Of childhoodt it come back to me,  
So dot it vas a dream I see  
Ven I yust look at anyding!  
Unt ven dot leedle boy run' by,  
I t'ink "Dot's *me*," fon hour to hour  
Schtill chasing yet dose butterfly  
Fon flower to flower!

MR. SILBERBERG

Oxpose I vas lots money vairt,  
Vit blenty schtone-front schtore to rent,  
Unt mor'gages at twelf-per-tcent.,  
Unt diamondts in my ruffled shairt,—  
I make a'signment of all dot,  
Unt tairn it over vit a schmile  
Aber you please—but, don'd forgot,  
I keep dot chile!

## SPIRITS AT HOME

### THE FAMILY

THERE was Father, and Mother, and Emmy, and Jane,  
And Lou, and Ellen, and John and me—  
And father was killed in the war, and Lou  
She died of consumption, and John did too,  
And Emmy she went with the pleurisy.

### THE SPIRITS

Father believed in 'em all his life—  
But Mother, at first, she'd shake her head—  
Till after the battle of Champion Hill,  
When many a flag in the winder-sill  
Had crape mixed in with the white and red!

I used to doubt 'em myself till then—  
But me and Mother was satisfied  
When Ellen she set, and Father came

## SPIRITS AT HOME

And rapped "God Bless You!" and Mother's name,  
And "The Flag's up here!" . . . And we all just  
cried.

Used to come often, after that,  
And talk to us—just as he used to do,  
Pleasantest kind! And once, for John,  
He said he was "lonesome, but wouldn't let on—  
Fear Mother would worry, and Emmy and Lou."

But Lou was the bravest girl on earth—  
For all she never was hale and strong,  
She'd have her fun!—With her voice clean lost  
She'd laugh and joke us that "when *she* crossed  
To Father, *we'd* all come taggin' along!"

Died—just that way! And the raps was thick  
*That* night, as they often since occur,  
Extry loud! And when *Lou* got back  
She said it was Father and her—and "*whack!*"  
She tuk the table—and we knowed *her!*

John and Emmy, in five years more,  
Both had went.—And it seemed like fate,—  
For the old home *it* burnt down.—But Jane

## SPIRITS AT HOME

And me and Ellen we built again  
The new house, here, on the old estate.

And a happier family I don't know  
Of *anywheres*—unless it's *them*,—  
Father, with all his love for Lou,  
And her there with him, and healthy, too,  
And laughin', with John and little Em.

And, first we moved in the *new* house here,  
They all dropped in for a long pow-wow:—  
“We like your buildin', of course,” Lou said,—  
“But wouldn't swop with you to save your head—  
For *we* live in the ghost of the old house now!”

## A HINT OF SPRING

'Twas but a hint of Spring—for still  
The atmosphere was sharp and chill,  
Save where the genial sunshine smote  
The shoulders of my overcoat,  
And o'er the snow beneath my feet  
Laid spectral fences down the street.

My *shadow*, even, seemed to be  
Elate with some new buoyancy,  
And bowed and bobbed in my advance  
With trippingest extravagance,  
And, when the birds chirpt out somewhere,  
It seemed to wheel with me and stare.

Above I heard a rasping stir—  
And on a roof the carpenter  
Was perched, and prodding rusty leaves  
From out the choked and dripping eaves—

## A HINT OF SPRING

And some one, hammering about,  
Was taking all the windows out.

Old scraps of shingles fell before  
The noisy mansion's open door;  
And wrangling children raked the yard,  
And laboured much, and laughed as hard,  
And fired the burning trash I smelt  
And sniffed again—so good I felt!

## LOCKERBIE FAIR

1901

O THE Lockerbie Fair!—Have you heard of its fame  
And its fabulous riches, too rare for a name!—  
The gold of the noon of the June-time refined  
To the Orient-Night, till the eyes and the mind  
Are dazed with the sights, in the earth and the air,  
Of the opulent splendours of Lockerbie Fair.

What more fortunate fate might to mortal befall,  
Midst the midsummer beauty and bloom of it all,  
Than to glit with the moon o'er the rapturous scene  
And twink with the stars as they laughingly lean  
O'er the luminous revel and glamour and glare  
Fused in one dazzling glory at Lockerbie Fair.

The Night, like a queen in her purple and lace,  
With her diamonded brow, and imperious grace,  
As she leads her fair votaries, train upon train,

## LOCKERBIE FAIR

A-dance thro' the feasts of this mystic domain  
To the mandolin's twang, and the warble and blare  
Of voice, flute and bugle at Lockerbie Fair.

All strange, ever-changing, enchanted delights  
Found now in this newer Arabian Nights,—  
Where each lovely maid is a Princess, and each  
Lucky swain an Aladdin—all treasures in reach  
Of the "*lamps*" and the "*rings*"—and with *Genii* to  
    spare,  
Simply waiting your orders, at Lockerbie Fair.

## A TINKLE OF BELLS

THE light of the moon on the white of the snow,  
And the answering twinkles along the street,  
And our sleigh flashing by, in the glamour and glow  
Of the glorious nights of the long ago,  
When the laugh of her lips rang clear and sweet  
As the tinkle our horses shook out of the bells  
And flung and tossed back  
On our glittering track  
In a shower of tremulous, murmuring swells  
Of the echoing, airy, melodious bells!—  
O the mirth of the bells!  
And the worth of the bells!  
Come tinkle again, in this dearth of the bells,  
The laughter and love that I lack, yearning back  
For the far-away sound of the bells!

Ah! the bells, they were glad in the long ago!  
And the tinkles they had, they have thrilled me so  
I have said: "It is they and her songs and face

## A TINKLE OF BELLS

Make summer for me of the wintriest place!"

And now—but sobbings and sad farewells,  
As I peer in the night through the sleeted pane,  
Hearing a clangour and wrangle of bells,  
And never a tinkle again!

The snow is a-swoon, and the moon dead-white,  
And the frost is wild in the air to-night!

Yet still will I linger and listen and pray  
Till the sound of her voice shall come this way,  
With a tinkle of bells,

And the lisp-like tread  
Of the hooves of the sleigh,  
And the murmurs and swells  
Of the vows she said.

And O, I shall listen as madmen may,  
Till the tinkling bells ring down this way!—  
Till again the grasp of my hand entwines  
The tensioned loops of the quivering lines,  
And again we ride in the wake of the pride  
And the strength of the coursers, side by side;  
With our faces smitten again by the spray  
Of the froth of our steeds as we gallop away  
In affright of the bells,  
And the might of the bells,

## A TINKLE OF BELLS

And the infinite glee and delight of the bells,  
As they tinkle and tinkle and tinkle, till they  
Are heard through a dawn where the mists are drawn,  
And we canter a gallop and dash away  
Sheer into The Judgment Day!

## CHRISTMAS SEASON

TO A FRIEND VISITING ENGLAND

THIS is a Christmas carol—

A late one, it is true,—

But (dight in Truth's apparel)

The best that we can do:—

The best our Muse belated

Thus offers, antedated,—

E'en as the old waits waited

We, waiting, sing for you.

So, haply, you may listen,

As 'twere, with Fancy's ear,

And shape such songs of this-un

As were worth worlds to hear,—

Such anthemings ecstatic

As scaled The Mermaid's attic

In midnights aromatic

Of choicest Christmas cheer:


## CHRISTMAS SEASON

Such songs as Marlowe lifted,  
With throstle-throated Will  
And rare Ben, as they shifted  
Their laughing voices till  
The mirth, with music blended,  
So oversweet ascended,  
It well were never ended—  
And, hark!—you hear it still! . . .

You hear it; aye, and love it!—  
Beyond all voices dear—  
Your master's!—none above it.—  
So harken, and so hear!—  
Your master's English.—Surely  
No other rests so purely  
On Fame, or more securely,—  
O English of Shakespeare!



## AN ORDER FOR A SONG



MAKE me a song of all good things,  
And fill it full of murmurings,  
Of merry voices, such as we  
Remember in our infancy;  
But make it tender, for the sake  
Of hearts that brood and tears that break,  
And tune it with the harmony,  
The sighs of sorrow make.

Make me a song of summer-time,  
And pour such music down the rhyme  
As ripples over gleaming sands  
And grassy brinks of meadow-lands;  
But make it very sweet and low,  
For need of them that sorrow so,  
Because they reap with empty hands  
The dreams of long ago.

## AN ORDER FOR A SONG

Make me a song of such a tone,  
That when we croon it all alone,  
The tears of longing as they drip,  
Will break in laughter on the lip;  
And make it, oh, so pure and clear  
And jubilant that every ear  
Shall drink its rapture sip by sip,  
And Heaven lean to hear.

## HER BEAUTIFUL HANDS

O YOUR hands—they are strangely fair!  
Fair—for the jewels that sparkle there,—  
Fair—for the witchery of the spell  
That ivory keys alone can tell;  
But when their delicate touches rest  
Here in my own do I love them best,  
As I clasp with eager, acquisitive spans  
My glorious treasure of beautiful hands!

Marvelous—wonderful—beautiful hands!  
They can coax roses to bloom in the strands  
Of your brown tresses; and ribbons will twine,  
Under mysterious touches of thine,  
Into such knots as entangle the soul  
And fetter the heart under such a control  
As only the strength of my love understands—  
My passionate love for your beautiful hands.

As I remember the first fair touch  
Of those beautiful hands that I love so much,

## HER BEAUTIFUL HANDS

I seem to thrill as I then was thrilled,  
Kissing the glove that I found unfilled—  
When I met your gaze, and the queenly bow,  
As you said to me, laughingly, "Keep it now!" . . .  
And dazed and alone in a dream I stand,  
Kissing this ghost of your beautiful hand.

When first I loved, in the long ago,  
And held your hand as I told you so—  
Pressed and caressed it and gave it a kiss  
And said "I could die for a hand like this!"  
Little I dreamed love's fullness yet  
Had to ripen when eyes were wet  
And prayers were vain in their wild demands  
For one warm touch of your beautiful hands.

. . . . .

Beautiful Hands!—O Beautiful Hands!  
Could you reach out of the alien lands  
Where you are lingering, and give me, to-night,  
Only a touch—were it ever so light—  
My heart were soothed, and my weary brain  
Would lull itself into rest again;  
For there is no solace the world commands  
Like the caress of your beautiful hands.

## THE BEST IS GOOD ENOUGH

I QUARREL not with Destiny,  
But make the best of everything—  
The best is good enough for me.

Leave Discontent alone, and she  
Will shut her mouth and let *you* sing.  
I quarrel not with Destiny.

I take some things, or let 'em be—  
Good gold has always got the ring;  
The best is good enough for me.

Since Fate insists on secrecy,  
I have no arguments to bring—  
I quarrel not with Destiny.

The fellow that goes "haw" for "gee"  
Will find he hasn't got full swing.  
The best is good enough for me.

THE BEST IS GOOD ENOUGH

One only knows our needs, and He  
Does all of the distributing.  
I quarrel not with Destiny:  
The best is good enough for me.

## TOIL

HE had toiled away for a weary while,  
Through day's dull glare and night's deep gloom;  
And many a long and lonesome mile  
He had paced in the round of his dismal room;  
He had fared on hunger—had drank of pain  
As the drouthy earth might drink of rain;  
And the brow he leaned in his trembling palm  
Throbbled with a misery so intense  
That never again did it seem that calm  
Might come to him with the gracious balm  
Of old-time languor and indolence.  
And he said, "I will leave the tale half told,  
And leave the song for the winds to sing;  
And the pen—that pitiless blade of gold  
That stabs my heart like a dagger-sting—  
I will drive to the hilt through the inkstand's top  
And spill its blood to the last black drop!"

## TOIL

Then he masked his voice with a laugh, and went  
Out in the world with a lawless grace—  
With a brazen lie in his eyes and face  
Told in a smile of glad content:  
He roved the round of pleasures through,  
And tasted each as it pleased him to;  
He joined old songs, and the clink and din  
Of the revelers at the banquet hall;  
And he tripped his feet where the violin  
Spun its waltz for the carnival;  
He looked, bedazed, on the luring wile  
And the siren-light of a woman's smile,  
And peered in her eyes as a diver might  
Peer in the sea ere he leaps outright,—  
Caught his breath, with a glance above,  
And dropped full-length in the depths of love.

. . . . .  
'Tis well if ever the false lights die  
On the alien coasts where our wreck'd hopes lie!  
'Tis well to feel, through the blinding rain,  
Our outflung hands touch earth again!  
So the castaway came, safe from doom,  
Back at last to his lonely room,  
Filled with its treasure of work to do  
And radiant with the light and bloom

## TOIL

Of the summer sun and his glad soul, too!  
And sweet as ever the song of birds,  
Over his work he sang these words:—

“O friends are good, with their princely ways,  
And royal hearts they are goodly things;  
And fellowship, in the long dark days  
When the drear soul cowers with drooping wings,  
Is a thing to yearn for.—*Mirth* is good,—  
For a ringing laugh is a rhythmic cry  
Blown like a hail from the Angelhood  
To the barque of the lone soul drifting by.—  
Goodly, too, is the mute caress  
Of woman’s hands and their tenderness—  
The warm breath wet with the dews of love—  
The vine-like arms, and the fruit thereof—  
The touch that thrills, and the kiss that melts,—  
But Toil is sweeter than all things else. . . .

## HIS ROOM

“I’m home again, my dear old Room,  
I’m home again, and happy, too,  
As, peering through the brightening gloom,  
I find myself alone with you:

## TOIL

Though brief my stay, nor far away,  
I missed you—missed you night and day—  
As wildly yearned for you as now.—  
Old Room, how are you, anyhow?

“My easy chair, with open arms,  
Awaits me just within the door;  
The littered carpet’s woven charms  
Have never seemed so bright before,—  
The old rosettes and mignonettes  
And ivy-leaves and violets,  
Look up as pure and fresh of hue  
As though baptized in morning-dew.

“Old Room, to me your homely walls  
Fold round me like the arms of love,  
And over all my being falls  
A blessing pure as from above—  
Even as a nestling child caressed  
And lulled upon a loving breast,  
With folded eyes, too glad to weep  
And yet too sad for dreams or sleep.

“You’ve been so kind to me, old Room—  
So patient in your tender care,

## TOIL

My drooping heart in fullest bloom  
Has blossomed for you unaware;  
And who but you had cared to woo  
A heart so dark, and heavy too,  
As in the past you lifted mine  
From out the shadow to the shine?

“For I was but a wayward boy  
When first you gladly welcomed me  
And taught me work was truer joy  
Than rioting incessantly:  
And thus the din that stormed within  
The old guitar and violin  
Has fallen in a fainter tone  
And sweeter, for your sake alone.

“Though in my absence I have stood  
In festal halls a favoured guest,  
I missed, in this old quietude,  
My worthy work and worthy rest—  
By *this* I know that long ago  
You loved me first, and told me so  
In art's mute eloquence of speech  
The voice of praise may never reach.

## TOIL

“For lips and eyes in truth’s disguise  
    Confuse the faces of my friends,  
Till old affection’s fondest ties  
    I find unraveling at the ends;  
    But, as I turn to you, and learn  
    To meet my griefs with less concern,  
    Your love seems all I have to keep  
    Me smiling lest I needs must weep.

“Yet I am happy, and would fain  
    Forget the world and all its woes;  
So set me to my tasks again,  
    Old Room, and lull me to repose:  
    And as we glide adown the tide  
    Of dreams, forever side by side,  
    I’ll hold your hands as lovers do  
    Their sweethearts’ and talk love to you.”

## YLLADMAR

HER hair was, oh, so dense a blur  
Of darkness, midnight envied her;  
And stars grew dimmer in the skies  
To see the glory of her eyes;  
And all the summer-rain of light  
That showered from the moon at night  
Fell o'er her features as the gloom  
Of twilight o'er a lily-bloom.

The crimson fruitage of her lips  
Was ripe and lush with sweeter wine  
Than burgundy or muscadine  
Or vintage that the burgher sips  
In some old garden on the Rhine:  
And I to taste of it could well  
Believe my heart a crucible  
Of molten love—and I could feel

YLLADMAR

The drunken soul within me reel  
And rock and stagger till it fell.

And do you wonder that I bowed  
Before her splendour as a cloud  
Of storm the golden-sandaled sun  
Had set his conquering foot upon?  
And did she will it, I could lie  
In writhing rapture down and die  
A death so full of precious pain  
I'd waken up to die again.

## IN STATE

Is it the martins or katydids?—

Early morning or late at night?

A dream, belike, kneeling down on the lids

Of a dying man's eyesight.

. . . . .

Over and over I heard the rain—

Over and over I waked to see

The blaze of the lamp as again and again

Its stare insulted me.

. . . . .

It is not the click of the clock I hear—

It is the *pulse* of the clock,—and lo!

How it throbs and throbs on the quickened ear

Of the dead man listening so!

## IN STATE

I heard them whisper "*She* would not come;"

But, being dead, I knew—I knew! . . .

Some hearts they love us alive, and some

They love us dead—they do!

And *I* am dead—and I joy to be,—

For here are my folded hands, so cold,

And yet blood-warm with the roses she

Has given me to hold.

Dead—yea, dead!—But I hear the beat

Of her heart, as her warm lips touch my brow—

And O how sweet—how *blinding* sweet

To know that she loves me *now*!

## THE MUTE SINGER

### I

THE morning sun seemed fair as though  
It were a great red rose ablow  
    In lavish bloom,  
With all the air for its perfume,—  
    Yet he who had been wont to sing,  
    Could trill no thing.

### II

Supine, at noon, as he looked up  
Into the vast inverted cup  
    Of heavenly gold,  
Brimmed with its marvels manifold,  
    And his eye kindled, and his cheek—  
    Song could not speak.

## THE MUTE SINGER

### III

Night fell forebodingly; he knew  
Soon must the rain be falling, too,—  
    And, home, heartsore,  
A missive met him at the door—  
    —Then Song lit on his lips, and he  
    Sang gloriously.

## DAVE FIELD

LET me write you a rune of a rhyme, Dave Field,  
For the sake of the past we knew,  
When we were vagrants along the road,  
Yet glad as the skies were blue;  
When we struck hands, as in alien lands  
Old friend to old friend is revealed,  
And each hears a tongue that he understands,  
And a laugh that he loves, Dave Field.

Ho! let me chant you a stave, Dave Field,  
Of those indolent days of ours,  
With our chairs atilt at the wayside inn  
Or our backs in the woodland flowers;  
With your pipe alit, and the breath of it  
Like a nimbus about your head,  
While I sipped, like a monk, of your winey wit,  
With my matins all unsaid.

DAVE FIELD

Let me drone you a dream of the world, Dave Field,  
And the glory it held for us—  
You with your pencil-and-canvas dreams,  
And I with my pencil thus;  
Yet with never a thought of the prize we sought,  
Being at best but a pain,  
As we looked from the heights and our blurred eyes  
caught  
The scenes of our youth again.

O, let me sing you a song, Dave Field,  
Jolly and hale, but yet  
With a quaver of pathos along the lines,  
And the throb of a vain regret;—  
A sigh for the dawn long dead and gone,  
But a laugh for the dawn concealed,  
As bravely awhile we still toil on  
Toward the topmost heights, Dave Field.

EDGAR WILSON NYE

FEBRUARY 22, 1896

THE saddest silence falls when Laughter lays  
Finger on lip, and falteringly breaks  
The glad voice into dying minor shakes  
And quavers, lorn as airs the wind-harp plays  
At urge of drearest Winter's bleakest days:  
A troubled hush, in which all hope forsakes  
Us, and the yearning upstrained vision aches  
With tears that drown e'en heaven from our gaze.  
Such silence—after such glad merriment!  
O prince of halest humour, wit and cheer!  
Could you yet speak to us, I doubt not we  
Should catch your voice, still blithely eloquent  
Above all murmurings of sorrow here,  
Calling your love back to us laughingly.

## SONGS OF A LIFE-TIME

MRS. SARAH T. BOLTON'S POEMS

1897

SONGS of a Life-Time—with the Singer's head  
A silvery glory shining midst the green  
Of laurel-leaves that bind a brow serene  
And godlike as was ever garlanded.—  
So seems *her* glory who herein has wed  
Melodious Beauty to the strong of mien  
And kingly Speech—made kinglier by this queen  
In liliated cadence voiced and raimented.  
Songs of a Life-Time: by your own sweet stress  
Of singing were ye loved of bygone years—  
As through our day ye are, and shall be hence,  
Till *fame divine* marks your melodiousness  
And on the Singer's lips, with smiles and tears,  
Seals there the kiss of love and reverence.

## A MIDDAY IN MIDSUMMER

A DEEP, delicious hush in earth and sky—  
A gracious lull—since, from its wakening,  
The morn has been a feverish, restless thing  
In which the pulse of Summer ran too high  
And riotous, as though its heart went nigh  
To bursting with delights past uttering:  
Now, as an o'erjoyed child may cease to sing  
All falteringly at play, with drowsy eye  
Draining the pictures of a fairy-tale  
To brim his dreams with—there comes o'er the day  
A loathful silence, wherein all sounds fail  
Like loitering tones of some faint roundelay . . .  
No wakeful effort longer may avail—  
The wand waves, and the dozer sinks away.

## “FRIDAY AFTERNOON”

TO DR. WILLIAM MORRIS PIERSON

[1868-1870]

OF the wealth of facts and fancies  
That our memories may recall,  
The old school-day romances  
Are the dearest, after all!—  
When some sweet thought revises  
The half-forgotten tune  
That opened “Exercises”  
On “Friday Afternoon.”

We seem to hear the clicking  
Of the pencil and the pen,  
And the solemn, ceaseless ticking  
Of the timepiece ticking then;  
And we note the watchful master,  
As he waves the warning rod,

“ FRIDAY AFTERNOON ”

With our own heart beating faster  
Than the boy's who threw the wad.

Some little hand uplifted,  
And the creaking of a shoe:—  
A problem left unsifted  
For the teacher's hand to do:  
The murmured hum of learning—  
And the flutter of a book;  
The smell of something burning,  
And the school's inquiring look.

The bashful boy in blushes;  
And the girl, with glancing eyes,  
Who hides her smiles, and hushes  
The laugh about to rise,—  
Then, with a quick invention,  
Assumes a serious face,  
To meet the words, “ Attention!  
Every scholar in his place!”

The opening song, page 20.—  
Ah! dear old “ Golden Wreath,”  
You willed your sweets in plenty;  
And some who look beneath

“ FRIDAY AFTERNOON ”

The leaves of Time will linger,  
And loving tears will start,  
As Fancy trails her finger  
O'er the index of the heart.

“Good News from Home”—We hear it  
Welling tremulous, yet clear  
And holy as the spirit  
Of the song we used to hear—  
“Good news for me”—(A throbbing  
And an aching melody)—  
“Has come across the”—(sobbing,  
Yea, and salty) “dark blue sea!”

Or the paen “Scotland’s burning!”  
With its mighty surge and swell  
Of chorus, still returning  
To its universal yell—  
Till we’re almost glad to drop to  
Something sad and full of pain—  
And “Skip verse three,” and stop, too,  
Ere our hearts are broke again.

Then “the big girls’” compositions,  
With their doubt, and hope, and glow

“ FRIDAY AFTERNOON ”

Of heart and face,—conditions  
Of “the big boys”—even so,—  
When themes of “Spring,” and “Summer”  
And of “Fall,” and “Winter-time”  
Droop our heads and hold us dumber  
Than the sleighbell’s fancied chime.

Elocutionary Science—  
(Still in changeless infancy!)—  
With its “Cataline’s Defiance,”  
And “The Banner of the Free”:  
Or, lured from Grandma’s attic,  
A ramshackle “rocker” there,  
Adds a skreek of the dramatic  
To the poet’s “Old Arm-Chair.”

Or the “Speech of Logan” shifts us  
From the pathos, to the fire;  
And Tell (with Gessler) lifts us  
Many noble notches higher.—  
Till a youngster, far from sunny,  
With sad eyes of watery blue,  
Winds up with something “funny,”  
Like “Cock-a-doodle-do!”

Then a Dialogue—selected  
For its realistic worth:—

“ FRIDAY AFTERNOON ”

The Cruel Boy detected

With a turtle turned to earth  
Back-downward; and, in pleading,

The Good Boy—strangely gay  
At such a sad proceeding—

Says, “Turn him over, pray!”

So the exercises taper

Through gradations of delight  
To the reading of “The Paper,”

Which is entertaining—quite!  
For it goes ahead and mentions  
“If a certain Mr. O.

Has serious intentions

That he ought to tell her so.”

It also “Asks permission

To intimate to ‘John’

The dubious condition

Of the ground he’s standing on”;  
And, dropping the suggestion

To “mind what he’s about,”

It stuns him with the question:

“Does his mother know he’s out?”

And among the contributions

To this “Academic Press”

“FRIDAY AFTERNOON”

Are “Versified Effusions”

By—“Our lady editress”—

Which fact is proudly stated

By the *Chief* of the concern,—

“Though the verse communicated

Bears the pen-name ‘Fanny Fern.’”

. . . . .

When all has been recited,

And the teacher’s bell is heard,

And visitors, invited,

Have dropped a kindly word,

A hush of holy feeling

Falls down upon us there,

As though the day were kneeling,

With the twilight for the prayer.

. . . . .

Midst the wealth of facts and fancies

That our memories may recall,

Thus the old school-day romances

Are the dearest, after all!—

When some sweet thought revises

The half-forgotten tune

That opened “Exercises,”

On “Friday Afternoon.”

## UNLESS

WHO has not *wanted* does not guess  
What plenty is.—Who has not groped  
In depths of doubt and hopelessness  
Has never truly hoped.—  
Unless, sometimes, a shadow falls  
Upon his mirth, and veils his sight,  
And from the darkness drifts the light  
Of love at intervals.

And that most dear of everything,  
I hold, is love; and who can sit  
With lightest heart and laugh and sing,  
Knows not the worth of it.—  
Unless, in some strange throng, perchance,  
He feels how thrilling sweet it is,  
One yearning look that answers his—  
The troth of glance and glance.

## UNLESS

Who knows not pain, knows not, alas!

What pleasure is.—Who knows not of

The bitter cup that will not pass,

Knows not the taste of love.

O souls that thirst, and hearts that fast,

And natures faint with famishing,

God lift and lead and safely bring

You to your own at last!

## PROSE OR VERSE?

PROSE or Verse—or Verse or Prose?

Ever thus the query goes,—

Which delight do we prefer—

Which the finer—daintier?

Each incites a zest that grows—

Prose or Verse—or Verse or Prose?—

Each a lotus-eater's spell

Wholly irresistible.

All that wit may fashion, free-

Voiced, or piped in melody,—

Prose or Verse—or Verse or Prose—

Which of these the mastery knows?

'Twere as wise to question, friend—

As of this alluring blend,—

The aroma or the rose?—

Prose or Verse—or Verse or Prose?

## CHILD'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

CHRIST used to be like you and me,  
When just a lad in Galilee,—  
So when we pray, on Christmas Day,  
He favours first the prayers we say:  
Then waste no tear, but pray with cheer,  
This gladdest day of all the year:

O Brother mine of birth Divine,  
Upon this natal day of Thine  
Bear with our stress of happiness  
Nor count our reverence the less  
Because with glee and jubilee  
Our hearts go singing up to Thee.

# A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS



*To*

HEWITT HANSON HOWLAND

WITH HALEST CHRISTMAS  
GREETINGS AND FRATERNAL

*Little Boy! Halloo!—halloo!  
Can't you hear me calling you?—  
Little Boy that used to be,  
Come in here and play with me.*

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

ALLUS when our Pa he's away  
Nen Uncle Sidney comes to stay  
At our house here—so Ma an' me  
An' Etty an' Lee-Bob won't be  
Afeard ef anything at night  
Might happen—like Ma says it might.  
(Ef *Trip* wuz *big*, I bet you he  
'Uz best watch-dog you ever see!)  
An' so last winter—ist before  
It's go' be Chris'mus-Day,—w'y, shore  
Enough, Pa had to haf to go  
To 'tend a lawsuit—"An' the snow  
Ist right fer Santy Claus!" Pa said,  
As he clumb in old Ayersuz' sled,  
An' said he's sorry *he* can't be  
With us that night—"Cause," he-says-ee,  
"Old Santy *might* be comin' here—  
This very night of all the year  
*I'* got to be away!—so all

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

You kids must tell him—ef he call—  
He's mighty welcome, an' yer Pa  
He left his love with you an' Ma  
An' Uncle Sid!" An' clucked, an' leant  
Back, laughin'—an' away they went!  
An' Uncle wave' his hands an' yells  
"Yer old horse ort to have on bells!"  
But Pa yell back an' laugh an' say  
"I 'spect when *Santy* come this way  
It's time enough fer sleighbells nen!"  
An' holler back "Good-by!" again,  
An' reach out with the driver's whip  
An' cut behind an' drive back Trip.

An' so all day it snowed an' snowed!  
An' Lee-Bob he ist watched the road,  
In his high-chair; an' Etty she  
U'd play with Uncle Sid an' me—  
Like she wuz he'ppin' fetch in wood  
An' keepin' old fire goin' good,  
Where Ma she wuz a-cookin' there  
An' kitchen, too, an' ever'where!  
An' Uncle say, "'At's ist the way  
Yer Ma's b'en workin', night an' day,  
Sence she hain't big as Etty is

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

Er Lee-Bob in that chair o' his!"

Nen Ma she'd laugh 't what Uncle said,  
An' smack an' smooove his old bald head  
An' say "Clear out the way till I  
Can keep that pot from b'ilin' dry!"

Nen Uncle, when she's gone back to  
The kitchen, says, "We *ust* to do  
Some cookin' in the *ashes*.—*Say*,  
S'posin' we try some, thataway!"

An' nen he send us to tell Ma  
Send two big 'taters in he saw  
Pa's b'en a-keepin' 'cause they got  
The premiun at the Fair! An' what  
You think?—He rake a grea'-big hole  
In the hot ashes, an' he roll  
Them old big 'taters in the place  
An' rake the coals back—an' his face  
Ist swettin' so's he purt'-nigh swear  
'Cause it's so hot! An' when they're there  
'Bout time 'at we fergit 'em, he  
Ist rake 'em out again—an' *gee*!—  
He bu'st 'em with his fist wite on  
A' old stove-led, while Etty's gone  
To git the salt, an' butter, too—  
Ist like he said she haf to do,

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

No matter what *Ma* say! An' so  
He salt an' butter 'em, an' blow  
'Em cool enough fer us to eat—  
An' *me-o-my!* they're hard to beat?  
An' Trip 'ud ist lay there an' pant  
Like he'd laugh *out loud*, but he can't.  
Nen Uncle fill his pipe—an' we  
'Ud he'p him light it—Sis an' me,—  
But mostly little Lee-Bob, 'cause  
"He's the best *Lighter* ever wuz!"  
Like Uncle telled him wunst when Lee-  
Bob cried an' jerked the light from me,  
He wuz so mad! So Uncle pat  
An' pet him. (Lee-Bob's ust to that—  
'Cause he's the *little*-est, you know,  
An' allus has b'en humoured so!)  
Nen Uncle gits the flat-arn out,  
An', while he's tellin' us all 'bout  
Old Chris'mus-times when *he's* a kid,  
He ist cracked hickernuts, he did,  
Till they's a crockful, mighty nigh!  
An' when they're all done by an' by,  
He raked the red coals out again  
An' telled me, "Fetch that popcorn in,  
An' old three-leggud skillut—an'

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

The *led* an' all now, little man,—  
An' yer old Uncle here 'ull show  
You how corn's popped, long years ago  
When me an' Santy Claus wuz boys  
On Pap's old place in Illinoise!—  
An' your Pa, too, wuz chums, all through,  
With Santy!—Wisht Pa'd be here, too!"

Nen Uncle sigh at Ma, an' she  
Pat him again, an' say to me  
An' Etty,—“You take warning fair!—  
Don't talk too much, like Uncle there,  
Ner don't fergit, like *him*, my dears,  
That 'little pitchers has big ears!"

But Uncle say to her, “Clear out!—  
Yer brother knows what he's about.—  
*You* git your Chris'mus-cookin' done  
Er these pore childern won't have none!"

Nen Trip wake' up an' raise', an' nen  
Turn roun' an' nen lay down again.  
An' one time Uncle Sidney say,—  
“When dogs is sleepin' thataway,  
Like Trip, an' *whimpers*, it's a sign  
He'll ketch *eight* rabbits—mayby *nine*—  
Afore his fleas'll wake him—nen  
He'll bite hisse'f to sleep again

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

An' *try* to dream he's go' ketch *ten*."  
An' when Ma's gone again back in  
The kitchen, Uncle scratch his chin  
An' say, "When Santy Claus an' Pa  
An' me wuz little boys—an' Ma,  
When she's 'bout big as Etty there;—  
W'y,—'When we're *growed*—no matter *where*,  
Santy he cross' his heart an' say,—  
'I'll come to see you, all, some day  
When *you*' got childerns—all but me  
An' pore old Sid!'" Nen Uncle he  
Ist kindo' shade his eyes an' pour'  
'Bout forty-'leven bushels more  
O' popcorn out the skillut there  
In Ma's new basket on the chair.  
An' nen he telled us—an' talk' low,  
"So Ma can't hear," he say:—"You know  
Yer *Pa* know', when he drived away,  
To-morry's go' be Chris'mus-*Day*;—  
Well, nen *to-night*," he whisper, "see?—  
It's go' be Chris'mus-*Eve*," says-ee,  
"An', like yer Pa hint, when he went,  
Old Santy Claus (now hush!) he's sent  
Yer Pa a postul-card, an' write  
He's shorely go' be here to-night. . . .

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

That's why yer Pa's so bored to be  
*Away* to-night, when Santy he  
Is go' be here, sleighbells an' all,  
To make you kids a Chris'mus-call!"  
An' we're so glad to know *fer shore*  
He's comin', I roll on the floor—  
An' here come Trip a-waller'n' roun'  
An' purt'-nigh knock the clo'eshorse down!—  
An' Etty grab Lee-Bob an' prance  
All roun' the room like it's a dance—  
Till Ma she come an' march us nen  
To dinner, where we're *still* again,  
But *tickled* so we ist can't eat  
But pie, an' ist the hot mincemeat  
With raisins in.—But *Uncle* et,  
An' *Ma*. An' there they set an' set  
Till purt'-nigh supper-time; nen we  
Tell him he's got to fix the Tree  
'Fore *Santy* gits here, like he said.  
We go nen to the old woodshed—  
All bundled up, through the deep snow—  
"An' snowin' yet, *jee-rooshy-O!*"  
Uncle he said, an' he'p us wade  
Back where's the Chris'mus-Tree he's made  
Out of a little jackoak-top

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

He git down at the sawmill-shop—  
An' Trip 'ud run ahead, you know,  
An' 'tend-like he 'uz *eatin'* snow—  
When we all waddle back with it;  
An' Uncle set it up—an' git  
It wite in front the fireplace—'cause  
He says "'Tain't *so* 'at Santy Claus  
Comes down *all* chimblies,—least, to-night  
He's comin' in *this* house all right—  
By the front-door, as ort to be!—  
We'll all be hid where we can *see*!"  
Nen he look up, an' he see Ma  
An' say, "It's ist too bad their *Pa*  
Can't be here, so's to see the fun  
The childern *will* have, ever' one!"

Well, *we*!—We hardly couldn't wait  
Till it wuz dusk, an' dark an' late  
Enough to light the lamp!—An' Lee-  
Bob light a candle on the Tree—  
"Ist *one*—'cause I'm 'The Lighter'!"—Nen  
He clumb on Uncle's knee again  
An' hug us *bofe*;—an' Etty git  
Her little chist an' set on it  
Wite clos't, while Uncle telled some more

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

'Bout Santy Claus, an' clo'es he wore  
*"All maked o' furs, an' trimmed as white  
As cotton is, er snow at night!"*  
An' nen, all sudden-like, he say,—  
*"Hush! Listen there! Hain't that a sleigh  
An' sleighbells jinglin'?"* Trip go *"whooh!"*  
Like he hear bells an' smell 'em, too.  
Nen we all listen. . . . An'-sir, shore  
Enough, we hear bells—more an' more  
A-jinglin' clos'ter—clos'ter still  
Down the old crook-road roun' the hill.  
An' Uncle he jumps up, an' all  
The chairs he jerks back by the wall  
An' th'ows a' overcoat an' pair  
O' winder-curtains over there  
An' says, *"Hide quick, er you're too late!—  
Them bells is stoppin' at the gate!—  
Git back o' them-'air chairs an' hide,  
'Cause I hear Santy's voice outside!"*  
An' Bang! bang! bang! we heerd the door—  
Nen it flewed open, an' the floor  
Blowed full o' snow—that's *first* we saw,  
Till little Lee-Bob shriek' at Ma  
*"There's Santy Claus!—I know him by  
His big white mufftash!"*—an' ist cry

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

An' laugh an' *squeal* an' dance an' *yell*—  
Till, when he quiet down a spell,  
Old Santy bow an' th'ow a kiss  
To him—an' one to me an' Sis—  
An' nen go *clos't* to Ma an' stoop  
An' kiss her—An' nen give a whoop  
That *fainted* her!—'Cause when he bent  
An' kiss' her, he ist backed an' went  
Wite 'ginst the Chris'mus-Tree ist where  
The candle's at Lee-Bob lit there!—  
An' set his white-fur belt afire—  
An' blaze streaked roun' his waist an' higher  
Wite up his old white beard an' th'oat!—  
Nen Uncle grabs th' old overcoat  
An' flops it over Santy's head,  
An' swing the door wide back an' said,  
"Come out, old man!—an' *quick* about  
It!—I've ist *got* to put you out!"  
An' out he sprawled him in the snow—  
"Now *roll!*" he says—"Hi-roll-ee-O!"—  
An' Santy, sputter'n' "*Ouch! Gee-whiz!*"  
Ist roll an' roll fer all they is!  
An' Trip he's out there, too,—I know,  
'Cause I could hear him yappin' so—  
An' I heerd Santy, wunst er twic't,

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

Say, as he's rollin', "*Drat the fice't!*"  
Nen Uncle come back in, an' shake  
Ma up, an' say, "Fer mercy-sake!—  
He hain't hurt none!" An' nen he said,—  
"You youngsters h'ist up-stairs to bed!—  
Here! kiss yer Ma 'Good-night,' an' me,—  
We'll he'p old Santy fix the Tree—  
An' all yer whistles, horns an' drums  
I'll he'p you toot when morning comes!"

. . . . .  
It's long while 'fore we go to sleep,—  
'Cause down-stairs, all-time somepin' keep  
A-kindo' scufflin' roun' the floors—  
An' openin' doors, an' *shettin'* doors—  
An' could hear Trip a-whinin', too,  
Like he don't know ist *what* to do—  
An' tongs a-clankin' down *k'thump!*—  
Nen some one squonkin' the old pump—  
An' *Wook!* how cold it soun' out there!—  
I could ist *see* the pump-spout where  
It's got ice chin-whiskers all wet  
An' drippy—An' I see it yet!  
An' nen, seem-like, I hear some mens  
A-talkin' out there by the fence,  
An' one says, "Oh, 'bout twelve o'clock!"

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

“Nen,” ’nother’n says, “Here’s to you, Doc!—  
*God bless us ever’ one!*” An’ nen  
I heerd the old pump squonk again.  
An’ nen I say my prayer all through  
Like Uncle Sidney learn’ me to,—  
“O Father mine, e’en as Thine own,  
This child looks up to Thee alone:  
Asleep or waking, give him still  
His Elder Brother’s wish and will.”  
An’ that’s the last I know . . . Till Ma  
She’s callin’ us—an’ so is Pa,—  
He holler “*Chris’mus-gif’!*” an’ say,—  
“I’m got back home fer Chris’mus-Day!—  
An’ Uncle Sid’s here, too—an’ he  
Is nibblin’ ’roun’ yer Chris’mus-Tree!”  
Nen *Uncle* holler, “I suppose  
Yer Pa’s so proud he’s froze his nose  
He wants to turn it up at us,  
’Cause *Santy* kick’ up such a fuss—  
Tetchin’ hisse’f off same as ef  
He wuz his own fireworks hisse’f!”

An’ when we’re down-stairs,—shore enough,  
Pa’s nose *is* froze, an’ salve an’ stuff  
All on it—an’ one hand’s froze, too,

## A DEFECTIVE SANTA CLAUS

An' got a old yarn red-and-blue  
Mitt on it—"An' he's froze some more  
Acrost his chist, an' kindo' sore  
All roun' his *dy*-fram," Uncle say.—  
"But Pa he'd ort a-seen the way  
*Santy* bear up last night when that-  
Air fire break out, an' quicker'n *scat*  
He's all a-blazin', an' them-'air  
Gun-cotton whiskers that he wear  
Ist *flashin'*!—till I burn a hole  
In the snow with him, an' he roll  
The front-yard dry as Chris'mus jokes  
Old parents plays on little folks!  
But, long's a smell o' tow er wool,  
I kep' him rollin' *beautiful*!—  
Till I wuz *shore* I *shorely* see  
He's *squenched*! W'y, hadn't b'en fer *me*,  
That old man might a-burnt clear down  
Clean—plum'—level with the groun'!"  
Nen Ma say, "*There*, Sid; that'll do!—  
Breakfast is ready—*Chris'mus*, too.—  
Your voice 'ud soun' best, sayin' *Grace*—  
Say it." An' Uncle bow' his face  
An' say so long a *Blessing* nen,  
Trip bark' *two* times 'fore it's "A-men!"



THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

TO NEWTON BOOTH TARKINGTON

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

YOU-FOLKS rickollect, I know—  
'Tain't so *very* long ago—  
Th' Old Glee Club—was got up here  
'Bout first term Grant tuk the Cheer  
Fer President four year—and then  
Riz—and tuk the thing again!  
Politics was runnin' high,  
And the *Soldiers* mighty nigh  
Swep' the Country—'bout on par  
With their rickord through the War.  
Glee Club, mainly, Soldiers, too—  
Most the Boys had wore the blue,—  
So their singin' had the swing—  
Kindo'-sorto' Shiloh-ring,  
Don't you know, 'at kindo' got  
Clean *inside* a man and shot  
Telegrams o' joy dee-vine  
Up and down his mortal spine!

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

They was jest *boys* then, all young—  
And 'bout lively as they sung!  
*Now* they hain't young anymore—  
( 'Less the ones 'at's gone before  
'S got their youth back, glad and free  
'N' keerless as they used to be! )  
*Burgess Brown's* old friends all 'low  
He is 'most as lively now,  
And as full o' music, too,  
As when Old Glee Club was new!  
And *John Blake*, you mind, 'at had  
The near-sightedness so bad,  
When he sung by note, the rest  
Read 'em fer him, er he *guessed*  
How they run—and *sung* 'em, too,  
Clair and sweet as honey-dew!  
*Harry Adams* 's here—and he's  
Jollyin' ever' man he sees  
'At complains o' gittin' gray  
Er a-*agein'* anyway.  
Harry he jest *thrives* on fun—  
"Troubles?" he says,— "Nary one!—  
Got gran'-childern I can play  
And keep young with, night and day!"  
Then there's *Ozzy Weaver*—he's

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

Kickin', lively as you please,—  
'N' *Dearie Macy*.—Called 'em then  
"The Cherubs." Sung "We are two Men  
O' th' Olden Time." Well! their duets  
Was jest sweet as violets!  
And *Dan Ransdell*—he's still here—  
Not jest in the *town*, but near  
Enough, you bet, to allus come  
Prompt' on time to vote at home!  
Dan he's be'n in Washington  
Sence he went with Harrison. . . .  
And *John Slauson*—(Boys called John  
"Sloppy Weather.")—he went on  
Once to Washington; and Dan  
Intertained him:—Ever' man,  
From the President, to all  
Other big-guns Dan could haul  
In posish 'ud have to shake  
Hands with John fer old times' sake.  
And to hear *John*, when he got  
Home again, w'y, you'd a-caught  
His own sperit and dry fun  
And mis-*chieve*-y-ousness 'at run  
Through his talk of all he see:—  
"Ruther pokey there, fer *me*,"

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

John says,—“though, of course, I met  
Mostly jest the *Cabinet*  
Members; and the President  
*He'd* drop round: and then we went  
*Incogg* fer a quiet walk—  
Er sometimes jest set and talk  
'Bout old times back here—and how  
All *you*-boys was doin' now,  
And Old Glee Club songs; and then  
He'd say, 'f he *could*, once again,  
Jest hear us—'*once more*,' says he,—  
'I'd shed Washington, D. C.,  
And jest fall in ranks with you  
And march home, a-singin', too!'"

And *Bob Geiger*—*Now* lives down  
At Atlanty,—but this town  
'S got Bob's *heart*—a permanent  
And time-honoured resident.  
Then there's *Mahlon Butler*—still  
Lookin' like he allus will!

“How you feelin'?” s'I, last time  
I see Mahlon: 'N' *he* says, “I'm  
'*Feelin'*?’” says, “so peert and gay  
'F I's *hitched up* I'd run away!”  
He says, “Course I'm *bald* a bit,

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

But not 'nough to *brag* on it  
Like *Dave Wallace* does," he says,  
"With his *two* shamefacetedness!"  
(Dave jest laughs and lifts his "dice"  
At the joke, and blushes—twice.)  
And *Ed. Thompson*, *he's* gone on—  
They's a whole quartette 'at's gone—  
Yes, a whole quartette, and *more*,  
Has crossed on the Other Shore. . . .  
*Sabold* and *Doc Wood'ard's* gone—  
'N' *Ward*; and—last,—*Will Tarkington*.—  
Ward 'at made an Irish bull  
Actchully jest beautiful!—  
"Big-nose Ben," says Ward, "I s'pose,  
Makes an eyesore of his nose!"  
And *Will Tarkington*—Ef *he*  
Ever had an *inemy*,  
The Good Bein's plans has be'n  
Tampered with!—because all men,  
Women and childern—ever' one—  
*Loved* to love Will Tarkington!

The last time I heerd 'em *all*  
Was at Tomilsonian Hall,  
As I rickollect—and *know*,—

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

Must be'n fifteen year' ago!—  
Big Mass Meetin'—*thousands* here. . . .  
Old Dick Thompson in the Cheer  
On the stage—and three er four  
*Other* "Silver-Tongues" er more! . . .  
Mind Ben Harrison?—Clean, rich,  
Ringin' voice—"bout concert-pitch,"  
Tarkington *he* called it, and  
Said its music 'clipsed the band  
And Glee Club both rolled in one!—  
(Course you all knowed *Harrison*!)  
Yes, and Old Flag, streamin' clean  
From the high arch 'bove the scene  
And each side the Speaker's stand.—  
And a *Brass*, and *Sheepskin* Band,  
(Twixt the speeches 'at was made)  
'At cut loose and banged and played—  
S'pose, to have the *noise* all through  
So's th' crowd could listen to  
Some *real* music!—Then Th' Old Glee  
Club marched out to victory!—  
And sich singin'!—Boys was jest  
At their very level-best! . . .  
*My!* to *hear* 'em!—From old "Red-  
White-and-Blue," to "Uncle Ned"!—

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

From "The Sword of Bunker Hill,"  
To "Billy Magee-Magaw"!—And—still  
The more they sung, the more, you know,  
The crowd jest *wouldn't* let 'em go!—  
Till they reached the final notch  
O' glory with old "Larboard Watch!"  
Well! *that* song's a song my soul  
Jest swings off in, past control!—  
Allus did and allus will  
Lift me clair of earthly ill  
And interrogance and doubt  
O' what the good Lord's workin' out  
*Anyway* er *anyhow*! . . .  
Shet my eyes and hear it *now*!—  
Till, at night, that ship and sea  
And wet waves jest wallers me  
Into that same sad yet glad  
Certainty *the Sailor* had  
When waked to his watch and ward  
By th' lone whisper of the Lord—  
Heerd high 'bove the hoarsest roar  
O' any storm on sea er shore!

Time's be'n clockin' on, you know!  
Sabold, who was first to go,

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

Died back East, in ninety-three,  
At his old home, Albany:  
Ward was next to leave us—Died  
New York. . . . How we've laughed and cried  
Both together at them two  
Friends and comrades tried and true!—  
Ner they wasn't, when they died,  
Parted long—'most side-by-side  
They went singin', you might say,  
Till their voices died away  
Kindo' into a duet  
O' silence they're rehearsin' yet.

Old Glee Club's be'n meetin' less  
And less frequenter, I guess,  
Sence so many's had to go—  
And the rest all miss 'em so!  
Still they's calls they' got to make,  
Fer old reputation's sake,  
So to speak; but, 'course, they all  
Can't jest answer *ever*' call—  
'Ceptin' Christmas-times, er when  
Charity calls on 'em then;  
And—not *chargin'* anything—  
W'y, the Boys 's jest *got* to sing! . . .

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

Campaign work, and jubilees  
To wake up the primaries;  
Loyal Legions—G. A. R.'s—  
Big Reunions—Stripes-and-Stars  
Fer School-houses ever'where—  
And Church-doin's, here and there—  
And Me-morial Meetin's, when  
Our War-Gov'ner lives again!  
Yes, and Decoration Days—  
Martial music—prayers and praise  
Fer the Boys 'at marched away  
So's *we'd* have a place to stay! . . .  
Little childern, 'mongst the flowers,  
Learnin' 'bout this Land of Ours,  
And the price these Soldiers paid,  
Gethered in their last parade. . . .  
O that sweetest, saddest sound!—  
“Tenting on the old Campground.” . . .  
The Old Glee Club—singin' so  
Quaverin'-like and soft and low,  
Ever' listener in the crowd  
Sings in *whispers*—but, *out 'loud*,  
Sings as ef he didn't keer—  
Not fer *nothin'*! . . . Ketch me here  
Whilse I'm honest, and I'll say

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

*God's* way is the only way! . . .  
So I' allus felt, i jing!  
Ever' time the Boys 'ud sing  
'Bout "A Thousand Years, my Own  
Columbia!"—er "The Joys we've Known"—  
"Hear dem Bells"—er "Hi-lo, Hail!"—  
I have felt God must prevail—  
Jest like ever' boy 'at's gone  
Of 'em all, whilse he was on  
Deck here with us, seemed to be  
Livin', laughin' proof, to *me*,  
Of Eternal Life—No more  
*Will* than *them all*, gone before! . . .  
Can't I—many-a-time—jest see  
Them *all*, like they *used* to be!—  
Tarkington, fer instance, clean  
Outside o' the man you *seen*,  
Singin'—till not only you  
*Heerd* his voice but *felt* it, too,  
In back of the bench you set  
In—And 'most can feel it yet!  
Yes, and Will's the last o' five  
Now that's dead—yet still *alive*,  
True as Holy Writ's own word  
Has be'n spoke and man has heerd!

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

Them was left when Will went on  
Has met once sence he was gone—  
Met jest once—but not to sing  
Ner to practice anything.—  
Facts is, they jest didn't know  
Why they *was* a-meetin' so;—  
But *John Brush* he had it done  
And invited ever' one  
Of 'em he could find, to call  
At his office, "Music Hall,"  
Four o'clock—one Saturd'y  
Afternoon.—And this was three  
Er four weeks, mind, sence the day  
We had laid poor Will away.  
Mahlon Butler he come past  
My shop, and I dropped my last  
And went with him, wonder'n', too,  
What new *joke* Brush had in view;—  
But, when all got there, and one-  
By-one was give' a seat, and none  
O' Brush's *twinkles* seemed in sight,  
'N' he looked *biz* all right, all right,—  
We saw—when he'd locked the door—  
What *some* of us, years before,  
Had seen, and long sence fergot—

## THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

(*Seen but not heard, like as not.*)—

How Brush, once when Admiral Brown  
'S back here in his old home-town  
And flags ever'wheres—and Old  
Glee Club tellin' George to "Hold  
The Fort!" and "We" would "make 'em flee  
By land and sea," etcetery,—  
How Brush had got the Boys to sing  
A song in that-there very thing  
Was on the table there to-day—  
Some kind o' 'phone, you know.—But *say!*  
When John touched it off, and we  
Heard it singin'—No-sir-ee!—  
*Not the machine a-singin'—No,—*  
*Th' Old Glee Club o' long ago! . . .*  
There was *Sabold's* voice again—  
'N' *Ward's*;—and, sweet as summer-rain,  
With glad boy-laughture's trills and runs,  
*Ed. Thompson's* voice and *Tarkington's!* . . .  
And *ah*, to *hear* them, through the storm  
Of joy that swayed each listener's form—  
Seeming to call, with hail and cheer,  
From Heaven's high seas down to us here:—  
*"But who can speak the joy he feels*  
*While o'er the foam his vessel reels,*

THE BOYS OF THE OLD GLEE CLUB

*And his tired eyelids slumbering fall,*

*He rouses at the welcome call*

*Of 'Larboard Watch, Ahoy!'"*

. . . . . And O

To *hear* them—same as long ago—

The listeners whispered, still as death,

With trembling lips and broken breath,

As with one voice—and eyes all wet,—

*"God!—God!—Thank God, they're singing yet!"* -



## ENVOY

BE our fortunes as they may,  
Touched with loss or sorrow,  
Saddest eyes that weep to-day  
May be glad to-morrow.

Yesterday the rain was here,  
And the winds were blowing—  
Sky and earth and atmosphere  
Brimmed and overflowing.

But to-day the sun is out,  
And the drear November  
We were then so vexed about  
Now we scarce remember.

Yesterday you lost a friend—  
Bless your heart and love it!—  
For you scarce could comprehend  
All the aching of it;—

## ENVOY

But I sing to you and say:

Let the lost friend sorrow—

Here's another come to-day,

Others may to-morrow.















